

Infrastructure and Planning History of 'Āo Valley State Monument
Compiled from Division of State Parks Files (1954 to 2004)

Year	Topic	Actions Planned or Taken
1954	Park Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park development began under Hawaii Employment Program (program to relieve unemployment) as a cooperative effort between Board of Agriculture and Forestry and Wailuku Sugar Company.
1955	Land Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of land in park use discussed with Wailuku Sugar Company; included existing lookout and picnic grounds. Division of Forestry budget operation funds necessary for park maintenance.
1956	Park Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park plans and land acquisition discussions continue; existing wooden footbridge and parking area noted; land suitable for inconspicuous restroom discussed.
1957	Park Signs Parking Area Improvements Comfort Station Garden and Taro Patch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wooden park entry sign: "Āo Valley Park; Scenic Lookout & Picnic Grounds." Sign posts stand on stone-wall foundation at end of road and entry to trail. White concrete blocks provide protective barrier between edge of unpaved parking area and drop off to stream. Restroom location selected above parking area; area is leveled and cleared; Forestry workman partially complete dry-stack rock wall to enclose leveled restroom area. Building materials for restroom and rain shelter purchased with legislative appropriations but construction held pending land acquisition negotiations Lower area by stream developed as garden with taro patch and pathways
1958	Park Overview Scenic Value Visitor Attraction Shelter Visitor Counts Park Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Āo Valley Park summarized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.78 developed area Park noted for spectacular mountain scenery, deep canyons and gorges, lush vegetation, rushing streams Geological formation, the "Needle," is main attraction Touted as one of Maui's showplaces and famous tourist viewpoint Has one rustic rain shelter with benches and landscaped grounds 30,000 visitors annually Future plans consider construction of picnic areas; developing camping, trails, and horse trails; expanding inland park into the basin or tableland
1959	Comfort Station Park Signs Footbridge Lease of Park Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leveling of restroom location and stone wall delineating leveled area completed Entry sign between end of parking lot and start of trail consists of two wooden signs hanging on an iron pipe frame. New footbridge completed Maui County urges construction of restroom at park for visitor convenience and comfort and for health reasons Lease of 3.78 acres of developed park area from Wailuku Sugar to Territory discussed

1960	Landownership and Acquisition Visitor Count Visitor Attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgency of settling landownership issues for developed park areas discussed • Land ownership issues need resolution if state to proceed with the “building of urgently needed restroom facilities” • Negotiations encouraged to expand park area to encompass “Needle,” table lands, and trail loop • Potential attractions include a 2-mile long scenic trail from the lookout point to the valley interior, an area known as “tableland.” • 24,000 visitors annually • A “must stop” for Maui visitors
1960	Park Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park “master plan” presented to Maui County; includes comfort station, water system, new bridge, park sign, steps to lookout, and lookout shelter
1961	Land Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wailuku Sugar Company transfers 3.853 acres to State of Hawaii as “gift deed.” Area encompasses end of road with turnaround area and all existing facilities (paths, two bridges, and lookout shelter)

Appendix I (continuation): Park Infrastructure and Planning History (1954 to 2004)

Year	Topic	Actions Planned or Taken
1962	Comfort Station Access Road Improvements Planning Entry Sign Shelter Tail Improvements Flood Damage and Repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comfort station completed ‘Āao Valley Road improvements by Maui County underway County asked to improve and expand parking area to accommodate “tremendous” increase in traffic as part of road improvement project Increased public usage anticipated with new comfort station, road improvements, and rehabilitated facilities, including water system Entry sign consists of tall wooden posts and cross beam from which sign hangs Rustic wooden shelter is at upper lookout with wooden hand rails and benches Concrete slabs installed as steps to upper lookout Footbridge restored after damage during rainstorm; concrete rubble-masonry walls repaired and new wall segment built to reinforce stream banks near bridge footings
1963	Road-Parking Area Improvements Park Signs Visitor Counts Pathway Improvements Flood Damage and Repair Water System ‘Āao Stream Reservoir Proposal Park Expansion Plan Gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road and parking area paved; parking area expanded into cut slope; parking stalls striped; excavated material extends embankment toward stream Stone wall built along edge of parking lot and guard rails installed; end of the road blocked with boulders and area landscaped with grass New park sign installed Visitor usage increases from 3,325 to 8,750 in one year; increase attributed to improved road and expanded parking Pathways within park paved, including those to restroom, from parking lot to bridge, to the taro patches, and to the stream Concrete rubble-masonry retaining wall along stream bank requires repair after storm; wall extended, boulders deposited by storm blasted and bulldozed to open stream channel; work requires right-of-way agreement with Wailuku Sugar Co. New water system planned; water pumped from Kepaniwai County Park to water tank above comfort station; pipes connect tank with comfort station and drinking fountain Long lines of tourists wait to use comfort station; most are part of bus tours Maui County requests U.S. Army Corp of Engineer explore feasibility of damming ‘Āao Valley Stream; created lake to conserve water, control flooding, and create recreation opportunities ‘Āao Valley Lakeside Park assessed by DLNR; 37 acres potentially appropriate for lakeside campgrounds and cabins depending on height of dam and water storage capacity of lake; roads inland feasible by costly due to required slope cuts; more information needed on water-tightness of valley floor, water flow, and county water needs. Maui Planning Department wants master plan for entire state park system on Maui, wants focus on creating one major park on Maui that is the “caliber of Kokee Park;” believes ‘Āao Valley has this potential. Suggestions include damming stream to create water sports and fishing opportunities; trail system could open up “tableland” about the “Needle.” Guava picking permits developed for ‘Āao based on Kōke’e plum picking permits.

1963	<p>Park Land Acquisition</p> <p>Archaeological Evaluation</p> <p>Trail Improvements</p> <p>Botanical Garden</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLNR acquires deed to 0.1929 acres of land from Wailuku Sugar Co. to encompass upslope expansion of parking lot; land given as “gift deed”. • Bishop Museum examines Lo‘iloa, a stream bench downstream of ‘Āao Valley Park for its archaeological value and potential inclusion in the park. Many stone walls, enclosures, taro terraces noted in <i>kukui</i> grove on bench. Suggests potential for reconstructed Hawaiian village for visitors. • New set of trails laid-out on gravel bar down-slope of parking lot and along the stream bank; trail creates loop to join older trail, a landscaping and planting plan created for new area; considered part of “botanical garden.”
1964	<p>Shelter and Path Improvements</p> <p>Park Land Acquisition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New shelter constructed at upper lookout to replace old shelter. Also installed were 200 lineal feet of concrete steps to lookout, 110 lineal feet of pipe railing along stairs, wooden benches at rest stops, and paving at lookout area. Steps were pre-cast concrete slabs; shelter site was excavated and graded. • State of Hawai‘i transferred 0.309 acres as “quitclaim deed” to Maui County for parking lot and turn around area at ‘Āao Valley State Park.

Appendix I (*continuation*): Infrastructure and Planning History (1954 to 2004)

Year	Topic	Actions Planned or Taken
1965	Flood Damage Land Acquisition Park Planning Gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainstorm flooding undercuts concrete-rubble masonry wall and bridge pier; boulders set along retaining wall and pier to divert stream flow • 'Āo park foreman requests land be acquired from Wailuku Sugar Co. for additional parking; 21 parking stalls are not adequate, particularly between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm. Park administrator wishes to assess other options first and notes control of parking area turned over to Maui County • Park planner recommends potential improvements: new picnic area on stream bench below parking lot, path improvements, expand or reconfigure parking lot to accommodate more buses; plant identification signs, and assess use of "Kukui Grove" (Lo'iloa) for park purposes. Supports considering larger park from Kepaniwai up into the watershed to broaden recreational opportunities • Ti-leaf picker trails noted in and near the park
1967	Cesspools Flood Damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New cesspool constructed; cesspool lined with hollow tile; new sewer lines installed; old cesspool filed. Relocation required by regulations; cesspools must be at least 30 feet apart • Water from heavy rains undermines center bridge pier and corner of retaining wall; "island" of rocks blocks steam flow between pier and west side of stream; mobile crane needed to clear blockage
1968	Flood Damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood event washes out part of the "footpath" and undercuts bridge footing; remedies include piling boulders against wall and bridge abutment, banking of stream along garden up to bridge, and diverting flow from bridge
1969	Pathway Rail Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wooden hand rail at lookout point replaced with 1½ inch pipe railing (two upright pipes in concrete foundation with welded upper and lower rails); pipe guard rail installed on path leading to the comfort station (single horizontal rail with four vertical rails)
1970	Park Expansion Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLNR informs Maui County it has been asked to study feasibility of enlarging 'Āo Valley State Park to encompass entire valley and watershed above Kepanewai County Park
1971	Stream Stabilization Shelter Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protective boulders placed against eroding bridge pier; stream diversion work conducted from below footbridge to lower stream fork; stream channel widened, edge of stream banked to prevent erosion, and stream flow diverted away from botanical garden • 'Ōhi'a post replaced by telephone poles in 1964 lookout shelter
1972	Park Expansion Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLNR reviews feasibility study to expand park; finds plan not thoroughly researched and some proposals undesirable; concludes that valley interior should remain a watershed and wilderness area to retain its "charm." Wilderness could include trail and limited campsite system but no roads

1973	<p>Park Overview</p> <p>Visitor Counts and Uses</p> <p>Maintenance</p> <p>Cesspools</p> <p>Flood Damage</p> <p>Shelter</p> <p>Improvements</p> <p>Comfort Station</p> <p>National Landmark</p> <p>Wailuku-Lahaina Highway Plans</p> <p>Land Acquisition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Āao Valley State Park Inventory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6,263 acres (including that donated to the state by Wailuku Sugar Company in 1975) - Visitor information: 600 cars per day; 16 to 20 busses; estimated annual visitor count was 530,200 (1971-72) and 559,060 (1972-73); some hiking and camping up valley, use of swimming holes. - Maintenance needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cesspool primary problem; overtaxed and serves as holding tank that needs pumping three times a week. Pumping service hose cannot reach cesspool so sewage pumped to adjoining bush - Flooding has deepened stream channel in 10 years; portion of garden lost due to erosion, footbridge foundation scoured, ditch for garden needs changing to catch stream water - Lookout shelter recently renovated - Restroom serviceable if replaced in several years • 'Āao Valley designated a "Natural Landmark" in 1972 • Maui Mayor asks Governor to release funds to study feasibility of highway routes from Central Maui to Lahaina, including route through 'Āao Valley. Funds appropriated five years previously. Governor denies request because 'Āao Valley route too costly and would "have significant impact on the natural environment of the area." Governor would consider extending 'Āao Road for park purposes • Title for land owned by Maui County within 'Āao Valley State Park transferred to State Parks; land includes road and parking area
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Year	Topic	Actions Planned or Taken
1974	Land Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maui County transferred 0.309 acres to State of Hawai'i as "quitclaim deed" for parking lot and turnaround area at 'Āao Valley State Park; reverses 1964 transfer of 0.309 acres to Maui County
1975	Parking Area Improvements Cesspool Comfort Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking lot redesigned and expanded; an upper-level lot created above existing parking lot for "Auto Parking;" ramps provide access and egress from upper lot; lower lot designated for "Bus Parking Only." Concrete rubble-masonry retaining wall constructed along cut embankment of upper-level lot; drainage features and guard rails installed where needed. Capacity increased from 21 parking stall to 37 auto stall, 10 bus stall; and 1 handicap stall High usage, particularly by buses, and congestion given as reason for improvements; design maximizes use of constricted area with its on-way traffic pattern. Construction required major slope cuts for upper-level parking area; existing slope drops 14 to 15 feet; embankments are 6 to 7 feet high behind parking lot; 10 feet high along inland ramp, and 1 to 3 feet on the lower lot
1975	Cesspool Parking-Landscape Improvement Comfort Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cesspool overflow problem continues; cesspool inaccessible to county honey wagon; new parking lot improvements prevent past practice of emptying pumped sewage into surrounding brush New cesspool completed; seepage insufficient to compensate for inflow; high pumping frequency 2,100 square feet of redundant paving and base course removed; covered with topsoil and grass. Long lines at restroom reported; bus tour operators asked to stagger arrival times.
1977	Vandalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park closed between 7:30 pm to 5:30 am daily to curb vandalism
1977	Cesspool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to release funding for sewage system because "current cesspools" cannot handle usage and a "new cesspool will not correct the situation."
1978	Park Land Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Order sets aside 6.263 acres for 'Āao Valley Park (TMK: 3-3-03: 12, 13, 18) to Division of State Parks.
1980	Cesspool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cesspool pumped twice a week since 1978; frequency in violation of county Ordinance, improper functioning due to poor drainage conditions of the site and extremely use high loads on system; high use reflects large number of tourists visiting park; compliance waiver granted
1981	Cesspool Parking Area Pathway Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New cesspool installed beneath exiting ramp from the upper parking; 6 feet in diameter and dug to depth of 30 feet, sewer line installed to connect existing cesspool (at base of embankment below original comfort station) to new cesspool; old cesspools left on line to trap solids. Parking area resurfaced; included lower parking lot and ramp between upper and lower lots. Stone wall constructed between parking lot and path to lookout and bridge.

1982	Park Overview Comfort Station Parking Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Facility Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6.185 acres; 4 acres developed, 1 acre of lawn - Improvements: comfort station with storage room (1961), rain shelter and constructed steps (1964), water system (1964), cesspool (1981), pathways (1,263 unpaved, 1,277 paved), 200 concrete stairs; parking lot for cars (1976) and for busses (1961), and drinking fountain with river-rock facing (1958) • Original comfort station demolished and new one built; new station located on “old roadway” below existing one; new pathways established to new comfort station and to lookout trail; road pavement removed between newly established paths and converted to grass; work completed in 1983. • Slope cut 11 to 14 feet at a maximum to create level foundation for comfort station; cut removed path to original comfort station and southeastern corner of old comfort station foundation; much of the low rock wall delineating leveled area remains. • Lower parking lot shoulder and embankment eroding just beyond guard rail (i.e., Bus Parking Lot)
1984	Pathway-Lookout Improvements Water System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various improvements undertaken: all-weather surface installed on earthen trails along western side of ‘Tao Stream, safety railings placed along stairway to scenic lookout; lookout platform reconstructed; walkway to taro garden reconstructed, three benches installed, and water system upgraded

Appendix I (*continuation*): Infrastructure and Planning History (1954 to 2004)

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1988	Water System Parking Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pump site at Kepaniwai County Park improved Sections of lower parking lot paving removed and replaced
1994	Water System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water tank replaced with new steel water tank and concrete foundation
1997	Interpretive Panels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eight interpretive panels installed at park; three at entry to path to lookout and comfort station, one at entrance to taro garden, two along path to upper lookout, and one at the upper lookout
2004	Handicap Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handicap improvements completed for park entry and comfort station; access ramps constructed for comfort station and interpretive displays

